

THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF VILLAGES

neighbourhood and will explain his choice of residence by 59/
quoting the names of one or more of these; yet the weaving 602
together of so many strands of kinship and affinity, ultimately
through marriage links, is what gives the local population its 627/
relative degree of stability. It should be emphasized that the
integration established within a village by the network of 602
kinship and affinal ties is dependent on the integration created 621/
by the same amorphous network which runs through and 631
beyond the sub-chiefdom. It is this network into which the 600
individual is woven by multiple ties that absorbs the neo-
matrilineal pull apparent to some degree in choice of residence
and keeps the system essentially cognatic.

The use of the word *familia* reflects this situation. A man may 602
say of a particular senior kinsman 'He is my *familia*', that is, my
kinsman, my most important kinsman with whom I have
settled, yet also he may say 'My *familia* is in Cela', that is, the
greater part of my kinsmen live in Cela. When Bartolomeu
explained that he had settled where he did because of Luase,
he was perhaps combining the two kinds of references. He had 59/
settled in Gumba because he had a large number of kinsmen
there among whom Luase was pre-eminent. A man explaining
the locality of his *familia* in the wider sense will associate it with
a particular sub-chiefdom—'My family is all in Menga'—
when he is outside it; when he is in it he is more likely to refer to
a particular village.

Although individuals living in a village may have come there 62/
through several kinship sources yet the majority of them will
probably have some kinship or affinal tie with the traditional
headman. This collection of individual ties does not provide the 622
headman with a body of followers, nor is having a large number 602
of dependants a value of contemporary Umbundu culture. If
it were felt that the best thing to be in life is the patron of a
body of kinsmen and followers, headmanship would survive as a
predominant influence in local life despite the collapse of its
political and legal responsibilities. In fact not even old men feel
this way.

The idea of the village as a corporate group with a jural and 62/
political personality rather than a residential unit has not 78/
survived the break-up of agnatic solidarity, the disappearance